

Literary Companion.

"We shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if we can be numbered among the writers who give ardour to virtue and vigour to truth."

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THE ENTHUSIAST

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AN ORIGINAL TALE

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

CHAPTER I.

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I was born in the year 17—. About the period of my birth, as my nurse hath often told me, there was not another dwelling to be found within our neighbourhood: unless indeed, you would bestow that title upon a straw thatched cottage, the abode of a poor, industrious wood cutter and his family.—As for my father's, it was a plain double building. The only ornament was a small piazza around it, which, in summer time, was thickly hung with the beautiful woodbine. At the north end of the house, there was one room sacred to the feats of romping childhood; and it was here, in the glad hour of my life, with Susan and Thomas, I have often enough frolicked. Susan was to me not only a nurse, but a mother; (of my own mother I had never heard the slightest allusion,) and though she has been long gone to her home, I cannot recal her name without beholding her as I was wont.—Her cheerful, composed and benevolent countenance, her nicely ironed and plaited head-cap, her tidy short gown, and smooth, clean, checked apron. Poor Susan! how often have I sat in thy lap, with my little arms around thy neck, and my downy cheek pressed to thine—as old Thomas, famous for traditionary legends of Connecticut witches, hath lent wings to the long winter nights. When I was quite young, Thomas and Susan were my only play-fellows; and when with them, romping on the green, conning over my lesson to Susan, or listening to the oft told tale of Thomas, no child could be happier than I was. But when in the presence of my father, though I was too young to analyze my sensations, I could not but feel the influence of that uniform melancholy which seemed to prey at his heart, and which, whenever he was with us, diffused itself,

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creating gloom and silence throughout our little household.

The scenery immediately around my father's habitation did not admit of any extensive diversity of prospect—on every side you beheld mountains piled on mountains, and forests overtopping forests; in front, rising from the edge of the opposite shore, perpendicular rocks, which from the ten thousand different shapes they bore, looked as if they had been combatting with the elements, and had been shattered, as a punishment for their rebellion, by the thunderbolts of the Almighty. But notwithstanding there was a something beautifully romantic about the white-wooden habitation of my father. It stood so snugly embosomed in, and rose out of a forest so wide spreading and luxuriant. Its fore garden grounds, laid out into circular beds, intersected with neat gravel walks, edged with the ever green box, and blossoming with every flower in their season, were tastefully arranged: There was the modest hyacinth, —in early Spring, its tints as the blush of a bride coming forth from the bridal chamber; The tulip, which bears itself courteously and proudly, with its dark red color, rich as the robe of princes; 'The sweet scented violet,'—the white and the red rose, —once indeed the bloody emblem of the Houses of York and Lancaster; "*The Marigold, that goes to bed with the sun, and rises weeping*;" and there below, ran the dark blue wave of the Hudson.

The regulations of our household were as simple as the plan of our house. With the exception of four or five hours each day, which my father devoted to my instruction, the rest of his time was employed either in his library, or sauntering around, or attending to the cultivation of his gar-

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den. He was not in the habit of extending his walk to any great distance, and never rode out unless he was forced by urgent business. His reading was altogether miscellaneous, and therefore best adapted to a mind which, like his, chiefly sought occupation and amusement. When his mind was wearied with the dull system on which books are planned and written, he delighted to go forth and mingle in the works of his Creator. He was fond of the volume of nature; and the scene around him was as free from art, as the babe which lay on its mother's bosom. As in the babe the muscle was not restrained by the rich and gaudy attire which custom imposes; so—in the rude and wild scene about him, the workmanship of man had not enervated its vigour, or despoiled its beauty. It was here the winds of heaven could freely rage—and when the storm was up upon the mountain, he could behold it as it passed on, unimpeded by the artificial obstructions of a crowded city. The scene lay in the lap of liberty. To such a hold, the patriot retires, step by step, with his faulchion glittering on high—when he beholds the banner torn from the hall of freedom, and the unnumbered legions of a foreign host passing the green turf of his native land.

The library of my father was to him the comfort and consolation of his mind. It was in the south wing of the house.—It had one window which looked upon the forest, and another upon the river, and opposite shore. The plain pine shelves which were affixed round the room, were indeed crowded with moth eaten, though (which was somewhat remarkable) well dusted books. But to dust them was the pride and pleasure of Susan; and no one could take more delight in, or be more attached to the goods of a master than Susan. This library had but one ornament. It was the picture of a female, with an infant in her arms. The countenance was remarkably mild, and wore that sweet cheerfulness which wins the beholder. There was so much solicitude expressed for the child, which, like a little cherub, lay sleeping, that at once struck and melted the heart. I could never learn the history of the female. As I grew older, I be-

gan to imagine it was my mother. This suspicion was strengthened by a slight circumstance, which occurred, and to which I was witness. I once, at an unusual hour, entered the library. The picture hung in the centre, and was visible immediately, as you opened the door. My father stood before it, with his face partially hid by his hands. He was so wrapt in meditation, that he did not hear me. I spoke to him. He turned in some confusion, and I could easily discern the traces of tears. I merely told my business, and retired. As he did not deem it proper to mention, I never enquired the cause of his emotion. We should not only guard the sorrows of a parent from the cold inquisition of a stranger, but we ourselves should hallow the inclosure which he builds about the secret of his heart.

As for myself, I grew up sturdy as the oak, and yet pliant as the osier. I could climb the precipice, ford the river, level my musquet, bait my fishing-hook, frolic with Susan and Thomas, or be deeply engaged with my father in such studies as he recommended, with equal readiness and satisfaction. The many hours I was obliged to pass in company with myself, made me contemplative. My rambles amidst the wild, desolate, mountainous scenery about our habitation, imparted an ardour and impetuosity to whatsoever schemes I engaged in, and a warmth of disposition, which was constantly inducing me to embark upon the most difficult, and oftentimes, the most impracticable undertakings. But the singular melancholy of my father, the retired life he led, and my ignorance of every transaction of his former life, added somewhat of gravity and sedateness to my character, which in some measure restrained my otherwise rash and headlong disposition.

There was a rock which jutted out into the river, a favorite seat of mine. I have often sat on this very rock, when the bright and glancing sun shot merrily its beams upon the bonny blue wave of the Hudson. The rich crimsoned waters flowed peacefully onward, as if conscious that they were beautiful to the eye of him who gazed upon them. Afar off you would hear the noise

of the axe of the woodsman, and behold the smoke, peacefully curling upward, which betrayed where his neat and humble cottage was built. When the scene was still, and the air clear, you might faintly hear the noise of the voice of men; and I have heard, in such an hour, the sound of music breathed in a dying note over the waters. The green forest around, and the waves below me, were burnished by the rich, golden beams of a glorious setting sun. There were few clouds upon the sky, and these were gathering to where the sun was slowly sinking. It seemed as if they would win it yet a little while longer to the earth. Thus mourners close about the death bed of a dear friend. But the hour of his departure was come. Having put forth the whole strength of his brightness, he folded about him his illuminated robe and sunk, for a while, behind the distant highland mountain.

One fine summer afternoon, as I was returning from a somewhat similar scene, I observed a decrepid, old man, seated, not far from the bank of the river, under the shade of a large willow tree. He had taken off his three corniced hat, about which was tied a faded gold band—and had laid it beside him, in order to enjoy the cool fresh breeze, and wipe the sweat from off his brow. A long, smooth oaken cane was placed by his left side, and a dog lay at his feet. He had on a military coat, worn completely thread bare, and ornamented by two or three buttons, on which was stamped a liberty cap. It was a difficult matter to tell to a certainty the original color and fashion of his coat, for in the long wear of time, it had changed fashion and color so often, in order to keep it whole and decent (for soldiers are proud even in the hour of want) that whether it had been

blue or black originally, the old soldier was himself sometimes—though it caused a kind of smile—forced to doubt.

“My little lad, said the aged veteran, will you give a poor soldier a few half-pence.”

It was not a half moment;—I had put my hand in my pocket, pulled out the only sixpence I had, and gave it to him. I know not whether I acted from innate benevolence, or a humanity natural to all children. Perhaps both causes operated, aided by the singular beauty and softness of the scene.

I walked on with him—and in a short time he had told me the brief tale of his life. He had been the son of a respectable farmer, had married, and was the father of a son and daughter when the Revolution broke out. His son followed him to the field, and fell in battle. His wife had been butchered by the Indians, and his daughter was taken into captivity;—“But now,” he added, I am waxing feeble and old—my strength faileth me, and my eyes are dimmed through very weakness; my only support is a small patch of ground, and when my strength is gone—But it is foolish for an old man like me to forbode evil!”

My resolution was taken—I requested the old man to be seated, and that I would return in a moment;—I told his tale to my father, and all was settled.

The old soldier lived with us some years after this event. We always found him grateful, kind and obliging. When he died we buried him in the wood behind the house. “We placed a decent stone upon his grave.” I planted two willows, one at the head and the other at the foot of his humble mansion—Many years afterwards when I visited the spot, one of them was dead; but the other had grown exceedingly, and spread far and wide its branches.

(To be continued.)

THE LUSTRUM.

NO. I.

SIR,

In undertaking a periodical work of the kind which you are about commencing, you will, I think, agree with me, that you are entering upon no easy task. In order to become popular, and rise above the level of the every day

———— JUNE 2, 1821.

magazines and publications of this sort with which we are surrounded, your paper must be constantly replenished with original and good matter, adapted to the different intellectual palates of your readers; and in selecting such miscellaneous articles as are to find a place in it, your utmost judgment and industry will be required, and too much attention cannot be bestowed in making the subjects of your choice interesting and tasteful. It is on this account, and because I wish to see your paper divested of that dull and monotonous drone which has proceeded from the generality of our weekly productions, humming the minds of their readers into a state of quiescence and repose, that I, Thomas Oldboy, have addressed you from this my rural retreat, beseeching you in the name of the fair sex, to whom your labours are to be for the most part devoted; and also, as you regard your own interest and that of society, to enter upon this your undertaking with zeal and industry, to clothe yourself with cheerfulness and good humour, to let your remarks abound with wit and judgment, to give us stimulents rather than opiates, and to serve up your paper, as it were, decked with a garland, into the hands of your fair patronesses, from which every one of them may pluck a flower that may suit her. I would not, however, by any means, be thought to intimate, that those matters which tend to the more solid advantage of the mind should be neglected in your weekly labours. It should be your object, so to combine amusement with instruction, and to blend wit with reproof, that the mind, while it is entertained, may be improved, the principles and habits of virtue confirmed and strengthened, and the weeds of vice and folly eradicated from her path. The scenes of every day life will also, in a considerable measure, employ your attention; and it is in this department that I propose to assist you. I am a person who am considerably passed the meridian of life; and having spent the greater part of my former years in active scenes, have retired to this spot in the vicinity of your city, where I live on an easy competence, and employ my time, partly in reading, partly in cultivating a few favourite spots of ground, but principally in contemplating the sublimities and beauties of nature with which I am on every side surrounded; though I must own I occasionally fall into certain indulgences; but which, nevertheless, are pardonable enough in one of my age. I expect, however, much incitement and employment of mind from your paper; and I am extremely glad of the opportunity I shall have of making myself of service to so fair a portion of society, as the females of our great metropolis. It was with this view, as soon as I received intelligence of the proposed publication of your paper, that I directed Christopher to put my horse to my old fashioned chaise, (which I cannot help incidentally mentioning I have had newly painted this spring) and having put on my grey coat in which I usually visit town, came directly to the city, in order to make such arrangements as the nature of the occasion required. Intending to take under my inspection the manners and habits of the present day as they are exhibited in that place, I selected, to this end, two trusty and tried friends of mine, whose names you will see at large at the bottom of their communications, and who are men of very honest and worthy characters, whom I placed as watches over the city, and directed to transmit to me, from time to time, the result of their observations: and, in order to afford them every facility in the discharge of so arduous a duty, I portioned the city into two districts, one of which I gave to the command of each, and directed them to employ their utmost vigilance in the parts respectively assigned to them. I have on hand several communications from each of these persons, but shall send you on this occasion only two, which I received about a month since, and which, if you should see fit to publish, I shall follow up by some of more recent date, together with such reflections on my part, as were suggested at the time. It may be proper, how-

ever, to intimate, that I intend shortly to visit town, where I shall take a temporary residence, for the purpose of being nearer the scene of action, and of entering on the discharge of my duties in proper person; and when I shall invite all persons to address to me their complaints and communications, in relation to such grievances and enormities as may come within the limits of my jurisdiction. In the mean time all such matters may be left for me at Goodrich's library.

"*New-York, 28th April, 1821.*

"THO. OLDBOY, ESQ.

"Honoured Sir—Agreeably to your directions, I have been on the scout for several days, during which time many flagrant violations of the rules which you prescribed as a guide to me in my office, have come within my observation; but upon pressing closely on one occasion in discharge of my duties, I had the mortification of being called an impertinent and meddling fellow, besides being threatened with harsh treatment for my curiosity: upon shewing, however, the authority under which I acted, though they seemed well inclined at first to bring your right into question, they thought fit to alter their determination, and allowed me to pass without molestation.

Being yesterday on duty, I observed two females, very finely, though genteely dressed, walking down Broadway, over against St. Paul's; and appearing by their manner and conversation to be extremely amused with each other's society, and desirous of attracting the observation of those who were passing. I did not want any shove on the subject, for I had no sooner discovered them than I was on the pursuit; and having followed them down to within a short distance of Goodrich's library, they crossed over and went into an auction room. I had not been there but a few minutes when one of them mounted a chair at full length, and placed herself within a very short distance of the auctioneer, (who was, by the by, quite a smart looking young man): upon which the whole company, which consisted prin-

cipally of gentlemen, caught the sight, and as they cast their eyes upon her I could observe a blush to diffuse itself over her countenance, though I must add it was but slight in its nature, and seemed to create in her rather pleasure than embarrassment.—Whether she was to be publicly sold on this occasion, or had taken that situation merely for the purpose of showing off her charms of person (which I must acknowledge she possessed in some considerable degree) to more advantage, with the view of some future *private* disposition of herself, I could not discover. Having waited as long as I thought it was my duty to do in such a case, I inquired of a person who was standing near if he knew whether the lady was to be disposed of that morning; upon which he smiled (but for what reason I know not, unless he might have thought me not serious in the inquiry I was making) and said that he supposed so.

"I have thought fit to communicate to you thus much of this affair, though you will perhaps censure me for not staying to see the result of it. If it is of such matters as these that you desire information, there are instances of daily occurrence which I might send you; though I do not see the use you propose to put them to. I wish you to make out for me a more complete list of offences, and also to send me more particular directions, in relation to the demeaning of myself in my office, as I have doubts, on some occasions, to what degree my authority extends.

Yours faithful courier,
SAMUEL SWIFTFOOT.²²

The other relates to an offence of a more atrocious nature.

"New-York, 1st May, 1820.

"ESQ. OLDBOY,

"I have now to communicate one additional matter which has occurred since my last letter to you. Being last evening on duty in Broadway, just above the southern limit of my district, I observed, about ten o'clock, a well dressed couple before me of different sexes; and being a yard or two in the rear, I perceived the gentleman to manifest great uneasiness, and every moment or two to turn his head behind and look at me. Having some secret suspicions that I was not much out of the path of my duty, I walked up briskly, and in passing turned my head to observe them, when, to my utter astonishment, I discovered them to be of different colours,

the male white and the female black, the latter of whom had her arm linked in that of the other, and walked along with great apparent satisfaction. I looked upon this as an abominable fellow, and felt such a keen sense of his disgrace, and secret shame to think that I belonged to the same species with him, that I turned my steps and went down the first street I came to. But I shall leave you to make such comments on the subject as you may see proper. I have determined, however, to take the next offender of this kind into custody, and to report to you the particulars of the case, in order that you may pass judgment upon him with all dispatch.

In the mean time I am yours,
THOMAS SPYWELL."

TUNE—JESSIE THE FLOWER O' DUMBLAINE.—

I turn'd a last look o'er my dear native mountain,
Ere the dim blush of sunset grew faint o'er the sky,
All was still, save the music that leapt from the fountain,
And the wave of the woods to the summer wind's sigh—
Far around the grey mist of the twilight was stealing,
And the tints of the landscape had faded to view,
Ere my pale lip could murmur the accents of feeling,
As I bade the fond scenes of my childhood adieu.

Oh mock not that pang, for my heart was retracing
Past visions of happiness, sparkling and dear;
My hand was still warm with a mother's embracing,
My cheek was still wet with a fond sister's tear.
Like the infant's first sleep on the lap of its mother,
Were the days of my boyhood—those days are no more;
And my bosom's deep throb I had struggled to smother,
Was that infant's wild cry when its first sleep was o'er.

Years have gone by and remembrance now covers
With the tints of the moonbeam, the thoughts of that hour;
But still in day-dream the wanderer hovers,
Round the cottage he loved and its green woven bower.
And hope lingers near him her angel-lay breathing,
And points to a future day distant and dim,
When the finger of summer its eglantine wreathing,
Shall brighten the hour of his childhood for him.

Communicated to the Editor of the Literary Companion by a Friend of his Lordship.

UNPUBLISHED STANZAS.

BY LORD BYRON.

To ———.

And wilt thou weep when I am low ?

Sweet lady ! speak those words again—

But if it grieved thee, say not so—

I would not give thy bosom pain.

My heart is sad—my hopes are gone—

My blood runs coldly through my breast ;

And when I perish, thou alone

Wilt sigh above my place of rest.

And yet methinks, a beam of peace

Doth through my cloud of anguish shine,

And for awhile, my sorrows cease,

To know thy heart hath felt for mine.

O lady, blessed be that tear !

It flows for one that cannot weep ;

Such precious drops are doubly dear

To those whose eyes no tears may steep.

Sweet lady ! once my heart was warm

With every feeling soft as thine ;

But beauty's self hath ceased to charm

A wretch devoted to repine.

Yet wilt thou weep when I am low ?

Sweet lady speak those words again—

But if it griev'd thee, say not so—

I would not give thy bosom pain—

THE JUDGMENT—A POEM.

This is a poem which has lately appeared in blank verse. We have no personal acquaintance with its author, although his name has been suggested to us. The subject he has chosen is certainly one upon which great power of imagination and strength of diction may be displayed ; and the character of the poetry that which is best adapted to the purpose.

I have often wondered why blank verse is not more cultivated than it is. It is in this species of poetry, that the whole strength and beauty of the language may be brought into action ; and the fancy set free from the confinement to which it is subjected by the strict rules of rhyming, may soar enraptured into the most sublime and delightful regions.

We have not room at this time to enter into a particular examination of this work. In many places there is great force of imagination displayed, and a happiness of expression which would do credit to any author. But the limits of the poem are altogether too circumscribed for the magnificence of the

subject ; and we think that in several places, where he has descended into particularities, he has fallen from the sublimity which characterizes other parts of the work, and lost that poetic diction, and elevation of expression which are so necessary to give beauty and effect to numbers, and which so admirably pervade the works of Milton. Its beauties, however, are far more than sufficient to outweigh its defects ; and in several parts there is a luxuriance of fancy and richness of coloring displayed, which we see seldom excelled.

The subject is one which evidently affords a field for some of the finest efforts of the imagination ; and independent of the difficulties suggested by the author in the outset, there are many themes wholly untouched by him, which are susceptible of high poetic embellishment, and upon which great force of conception and language might be employed. The work, however, upon the whole, is one of merit, and will be perused by every American with interest and delight.

MARINO FALIERO—DOGE OF VENICE.

This is a tragedy purporting to be from the pen of Lord Byron; but we think that a bare perusal of it will convince any one who is acquainted with the productions of that author, that this is not the case. The poetry is by no means smooth, and the sentiments in some of the principal scenes, fall beneath the dignity of the subject, and of the characters who are concerned in it. The first act, generally, is written in a sufficiently easy style, and the dialogue discreetly and successfully managed; but there is after this act, a gradual falling off in sentiment, language, and poetical construction, which increases to the end of the piece; though, it must be owned, there are occasional striking flashes of conception, and an elevation in the style which occurs for short intervals, but which, however, it is not extraordinary should exist, considering the length of the play, and the nature and scope of the subject, even though the author should be of but moderate pretensions. There is however a heaviness which pervades the work, which is not relieved by any comic mixture of plot or incident, and we think every one who has perused it will agree with us, that, taken throughout, the interest of the piece is but barely sustained.

The dialogues between Angiolina and Marianna, and between the former and the Doge her husband become wearisome to the reader before they are concluded; and in the last interview between the Doge and his wife, particularly, where much affecting interchange of feeling might be expected, and where the nature of the scene affords such a field for the purpose, the dialogue is so inappropriate, and there is such coldness and common place in the sentiments and language, (especially in his parting address) that but very little, if any, interest is excited. There is no great knowledge of stage effect shewn in this

piece; and the closing scenes, particularly, are very deficient, not only in this respect, but even in common consistency. It is made necessary that the scene should be slammed too, after the raising of the sword, and whilst the executioner is in the act of striking the blow; and in the next scene, when we may reasonably suppose the sword to have fallen, and the head to have been severed from the body, we are entertained with a long discourse between six citizens who range themselves up before the gate-way, to communicate the result of their peepings through the grates, and relate in fact to the audience what they have just been witnessing: whereupon the last citizen very sagely concludes by asking "whether they are *sure* he is dead?" To those who are fond of a treat in these matters, we would point out the dying speech of the Doge, and the remarks of these worthy citizens, as being rare and delectable specimens in their kind: the first as being a very interesting and appropriate piece of declamation, and the latter as very sapient and instructive in themselves, and calculated at once to inspire the reader with a respect for the characters who utter them.

We would not wish in our remarks on this work, to be thought to have too much of the cynic in our composition, but the great, and in our opinion, misplaced eulogiums which have been bestowed by some learned editors on this work, seem to call for such an exposure.

We profess to admire the works of Byron, but can never be brought to believe that this is one of them. The general warmth and chasteness of style, for which his productions are characterized, are not to be found in it; and moreover, the great inferiority and harshness of a very considerable part of the poetry, seem sufficient to put down every suggestion of its being from the pen of that author.—

It is well known that several productions have been ascribed to his Lordship, to which he was a total stranger

until the time of their publication, and we are inclined to rank this among the number.

KENSINGTON HOUSE.

We know of no pleasanter excursion, than one to this house of feasting. I rode out with three others during the last week. *By the way*, we cannot help noticing those two tasteful buildings belonging to G. and R. Waite. It is said that life is a lottery: we think it has been a very fortunate one for these gentlemen. Their seats are undoubtedly the chief ornaments of the road;—and if they continue displaying their exquisite taste, and exercising their elegant industry—as Rollin styles it, the Corporation will most assuredly send them a neat bordered card, with an invitation, therein written, requesting the honor of their company to their merry makings, and yea, we do believe, the turtle club will not forget them.

That which first strikes one at the Kensington House is the bar, right in front as you enter, and is decorated with branches of the lilac, hanging like green banners on each side of it. Here stands the god Bacchus, crowned with the olive;—and with an invisible though irresistible wand entices thee to stay thy feet, and refresh thyself with that “which maketh glad the heart of man.” Having escaped this charybdis, we find ourselves in a spacious saloon, with a sofa in it. The river of the East is flowing below us. The island of Blackwell separates this mighty stream, which rushes on at the rate of eight miles an hour. On this side the large and beautiful green with two or

three horse-chesnut trees, with benches under them—in the middle, the Island of Blackwell with its grassy verdure—and on the other side the Island of Long, with its orchards, and meadows, and well cultivated fields, combine to set off the stream of the East—and all these together, go hand in hand, to add to the beauty and agreeableness of the house of Kensington.

Upon the top of this retreat you see a considerable distance up and down the river, and the blooming country around you. The neat country buildings are almost covered with trees and shrubbery, here and there the roofs peeping out. The river is now seen flowing on;—and then by winding in is for a little while lost; Again it strikes your eye, farther on, with here and there a vessel, sailing with its white canvass slowly onwards. We were just at this time called to dinner—after which the town people came in so rapidly that we had no time for meditation—There was D*s* H***r* with his tandem, at full speed. There was B. V. H. N. with his costly establishment, &c.

We notify our subscribers, that we will take the first opportunity to procure a view of the beautiful scene from the top of the house.

We had like to have forgotten the miltonian plates; we earnestly recommend them to the attentive inspection and perusal of young collegians, young bucks, and young lawyers.—

MRS. FOWLER'S PAINTING ON VELVET.

We observe that this accomplishment, worthy the liberal indulgence of our female patrons, is taught by Mrs. Fowler,

B

an amiable and respectable lady—at present she has vacancies for the reception of ladies wishing to become acquainted

with this art, at number 258 William street.

We have heretofore seen several European specimens of this kind of painting; but, few have surpassed the taste and elegance of her designs, or the richness and

brilliancy of her colors. The terms are so reasonable, few can object, on this account, from attaining the acquisition of so valuable an accomplishment.

G. B. H.

THE WITCH OF THE WOLD.

BY CHARLOTTE SMITH.

On a wild and dreary tract of country on the borders of Westmoreland, called a wold, which is in some places a sort of hilly heath, in others a black and marshy moor, there was a solitary cottage built by a man who passed for a very odd person: some said he was a madman, others that he had committed a murder, and others supposed him to be a spy—though no place could be so ill calculated as that he had chosen for the exercise of such a profession.

The peasantry of the neighboring country had an extreme dread of him; for none knew how he lived, and none had ever been admitted to his cottage, where it was supposed he resided by himself. There was a wood adjoining to the wold on the side next his abode, and through part of it lay the road to a market, at eight miles distance; this wood, which had formerly belonged to the large domain of an ancient family now gone to decay; had a very ill name.—An human skeleton had been found in it, and some of the most sagacious of the neighboring countrymen had hinted, that these remains were those of the person whom the Strange Man had killed; yet, in the paths of this gloomy wood, and crossing the wold towards it, late of a night as they returned from market, this mysterious being was often met by the terrified rustics. He passed them sometimes in silence, and at other times bade them good night in an hollow voice, which they declared was not human. The dread he inspired was at length such, that many of the people whose business led them that way, were used to cross a dangerous ford rather than go through this wood, or venture an evening meeting with "the Strange Man." This continued for some years: attempts were made

by some of the farmers to get warrants against him, to take him up; but as he was perfectly inoffensive, never troubled himself with them, and never solicited parish assistance, there was no justice who would grant it—till at length a weak and arrogant man, who loved to show his power, issued one: but just as the people who were to serve it reached the wold, a storm arose so violent and unusual in its effects, that the constable and his followers, convinced of the supernatural power of "the Strange man," fled in dismay, and thought themselves fortunate that they were not carried quite away in a whirlwind, which they doubted not he had raised by magic, to defeat their purpose.

The empty and half-ruined manor house, to which the wood had formerly belonged, was also an object of terror to those superstitious and ignorant people. It had not been inhabited for many years; but a grange or farm-yard adjoining to it was rented by a farmer, whose men declared that in those nights of winter, when they had occasion to stay late in these buildings about the farm-yard, they saw lights gliding about the old house, heard unaccountable noises—and one even went so far as to relate that he saw by moon-light a pale and ghastly face at one of the windows. The man was frequently seen stealing about among the ruins of the old buildings, and those who had courage enough to gaze at him, even at a distance, observed that he became more and more emaciated in his appearance: sometimes he suddenly rushed out of the wood, and passed across the path before some affrighted peasant. At length that part of the country was almost entirely deserted; the market people made another way, to avoid the wold and the wood,

but such as had, after a time, courage to pass, declared that the strange man was gone. None now saw him, and yet a little smoke sometimes ascended from the chimney of his cottage. Some persons, whose curiosity got the better of their fears, took occasion to peep in at the window, and said they plainly distinguished an old woman of very frightful appearance. An itinerant dealer in fish, who travelled that country, was the only person that knew who now resided in the cottage: he carried some provisions thither once a week; but the mystery he observed, and the strange stories he invented, as if with a purpose to mislead curiosity, served only to irritate the violent desire which some of the farmers' wives and other gossips had to find out who the person was whom they now chose to call "the witch of the wold."

It happened about this time that an infectious distemper broke out in that country among the cattle, and several of the farmers were entirely ruined.—Instead of rationally considering the cause of this, and of endeavouring to cure it by such remedies as common sense pointed out, they took it into their heads that the poor solitary being whom they called "the witch of the wold," had brought this calamity upon them; and without waiting for the interposition of justice, they assembled in a body with pitchforks and staves, and surrounded her house: she opened the door to them, and they rushed in.

They found in this hut, which merely consisted of two ground rooms, several things that confirmed their opinion: there was a mariner's compass, a quadrant, and some other mathematical instruments;—several books, in languages they could make nothing of, and which they therefore concluded treated of the black art.—There were some shells and dried plants and insects, which they were sure were collected as materials for the sorceress, and the only living animals were two cats; but every thing else was mere necessary furniture, and not better than that which they themselves possessed. The appearance of the old woman, however, would have been enough to have convicted her: she was thin and pale, bent almost double, and her countenance furrowed with wrinkles, expressed a sort of wild melancholy, which her persecutors believed an evidence of guilt.—The

poor creature submitted almost without a remonstrance to their cruel usage; and to their fierce interrogatories as to what was become of the man who once lived in the cottage? she answered, that after having kept his bed many months, he died; and she had, according to his own desire, buried him on the wold, near their hut.

She was then extremely ill-treated, and almost tortured, because she refused to tell who he was. She said that she had solemnly sworn never to reveal it; that they might kill her if they would, but that nothing she could suffer should induce her to disclose a secret, which to know would be of no use to them, while it would be breaking a promise she held sacred.

They accused her of having occasioned all the misfortunes that had lately happened in their neighbourhood. One woman said, that her poor little Jacky's fits had come upon him the very day after he had passed over the wold and that he had then received a stroke from an evil eye; another declared that her only cow had grazed one day upon the wold, and had sickened directly and died; and a third, a labourer, asserted, that at the time the lightning fired his master's haystack, he had seen this very old woman ride through the air on a broomstick.

Numberless other charges were brought against her, and they were proceeding to tie her legs and arms and throw her into the river, it being decided that if she swam in that situation she was certainly a witch: so that the poor creature undergoing such a discipline had in no case a chance for her life; for, if she was thus convicted of witchcraft, she would be tortured to death; if she sunk, she would inevitably be drowned.

But just as this misled multitude had dragged their unresisting victim to the river's brink, a gentleman of the country, as eminent for his intelligence as his humanity, passed by; and enquiring what was the occasion of the riotous assemblage he saw, he interfered immediately, and, being equally loved and respected, rescued the poor old victim of popular folly from the hands of her barbarous persecutors. His charitable interposition, however, came too late: though she was carried immediately to his house, put to bed, and carefully attended—she had already suffered too much from the rude

inhumanity of the mob; and in about three days she died, giving into the hands of her generous protector the key of a drawer in the cottage, where she told him he would find a written account of her unfortunate companion, and of herself.—It was only the authority of this gentleman that prevented the villagers from plundering the hut; where, as he had been directed, he found the following paper:—

“As this narrative will not be read till the hand that writes it, till the heart that agonizes over it, are mouldering in the dust; the wretched writer ventures to relate his crimes and his sufferings; trusting, that his deep and sincere repentance, as it may have made his peace with heaven, will mitigate against him the indignation of mankind; and that when he is sheltered in the grave, his name may be repeated without abhorrence. Yet were he not actuated by a latent hope that his sad story may serve as a warning against the indulgence of those fatal passions which have overwhelmed him with shame disgrace and remorse, he should willingly let the name of the wretch; and the remembrance of the evils he has occasioned, be perished in oblivion.

“I was the eldest of the two sons of a gentleman of ancient family, and of very considerable property, whose ancestors had for some centuries inhabited the large manor house of Eddenham, on the borders of Durthwaite wold, and our family name was taken from that antique residence.

“My father, who had lost all his children by his first wife, and who was far advanced in life before my brother and myself were born of a second marriage, doated upon us with the most extravagant fondness, and denied us nothing: to this fatal and ill-judged indulgence I owed my ruin, a ruin which involved in it that of all my family.

“Though I expended, even during my being at college, more than half the income of my father's estates, he could not determine to check me in my wild career, consoling himself under the greatest inconveniences with thinking, that I was a young man of spirit, to whom some extraordinary indulgences were necessary, and that when the hey-day of youth was over, when I had sown my wild oats, I should become more regulated in my conduct, and that all would be well.—

My mother, who though a good woman, was yet vain and weak, encouraged rather than checked these boundless indulgences. It was her pride, poor woman! to see her son, when he was at Eddenham, make as great a figure as the noblemen in the neighbourhood; and she delighted to tell of the exploits I performed in London, and the fashionable company I kept.

“My brother, though almost as much indulged as I was, happened to be of a different disposition. He was fond of books and of retirement, and, at his own desire, took orders at the proper age, my father having purchased for him a very considerable living not far from London. When I was three-and-twenty, I prevailed on my father to let me make the tour of Europe. He consented with reluctance, fearing he should not live to see me again. However, at the end of two years, which I passed on the continent, I returned, and found him but little changed. My mother too was living, and in good health, and they were both made very happy by the birth of a grandson, my brother having married about eighteen months before; and he was with his wife and child now on a visit at Eddenham.

“I had been in habits of seeing the most beautiful women in Europe, but so lovely a creature as my sister-in-law, it never was my chance before to behold. I became distractedly in love with her, and was not ashamed of meditating how I should steal her from her husband, though that husband was my brother.

“At first, the magnificent presents I made her, and my lavish flattery, were considered only as the effect of my general admiration of beauty, and my affection for my brother; but my behaviour was such as soon occasioned that excellent brother great uneasiness. He remonstrated gently with his wife, who treated him with contempt and disdain, resented his jealousy, and professed a determination to act as she pleased. My father and mother at last began to notice something strange among us. But I had now obtained such an ascendancy over the mind of my sister-in-law, that I cared very little for the murmurs or fears of the rest of my family; and unrestrained by any sense of honour, religion, or humanity, and in defiance of all the laws both of God and man, I prevailed upon her

to elope, and we arrived unpursued at Naples.

"There I found that a beautiful outside had concealed from me a disposition to every folly that degrades one sex, and a strong propensity to indulge in every vice that debases the other: but it ill became me to reproach her, of whose greatest folly I had been the occasion. No man, however, who commits a crime like that I had been guilty of, is long free from the admonitions of conscience; I endeavoured to drown the remonstrances of mine in wine, and by gaming and every other dissipation—but I was still unhappy. Judge then, O reader, what was my situation—what a miserable, a deservedly miserable wretch I became, when I heard—(the very recollection of my sensations still makes my hand tremble) when I heard—that my unhappy brother, unable to bear the loss of his wife, had perished by his own hand! that the infant boy, forsaken by both his parents, lingered a little while, and then followed his father to the grave! and that my poor old parents, reproaching themselves for having given birth to a monster like me, had both died within a few days of each other, surviving their son and grandson only about a month!

"Heart-struck, I fled with disgust and abhorrence from the woman whose fatal beauty, and my ungovernable temper, had been the cause of these horrors. I sent her a sum of money, told her we must never meet again, and besought her to hide herself, her guilt, and her sorrows in a convent:—but instead of doing so, she abandoned herself to such a course of life as soon destroyed her, and her death was added to the hideous catalogue of my crimes.

"Pursued by distracting remorse, which presented all my murdered family before me, I fled from place to place—but none afforded me any peace.—Wretched as I was, I thought a severer penance would alone relieve me. I de-

termined to punish myself with the view of the spot where all my family had perished, the victims of my unpardonable wickedness. I came then with my old female servant, who knew my deplorable story, to the Wold. I should deservedly have been hunted from my own house by the people of the country as a wild beast. I therefore built a wretched shed; and it has for some years been my custom to visit once or twice a day, and sometimes of a night, the house now falling into decay, where, but for me, my family might now have been flourishing and happy; where my fond and venerable parents, whose grey hairs I sent in sorrow to the grave, might have ended their lives in peace and honour among their posterity; where my brother—oh! dreadful and distracting remembrance! my mild-tempered, generous, affectionate brother, was driven by me to despair and to suicide!—Nightly, by the light of the moon and stars, as I have traversed these melancholy apartments, his bleeding ghost has met me! Yes, my conscience has conjured up the most frightful spectres!—but, with a gloomy and determined resolution, I have sought rather than avoided them. On the floor yet stained with my brother's blood, I have lain whole nights, groaning in such anguish of heart as guilt alone can inflict. Amid the tempests of winter, in wet, in wind, in snow, I have prostrated myself on the graves of him, of his child, and my poor fond mistaken parents. I have prayed to the thunder to strike, to the lightning to blast me, in vain—and often have I held to my throat the weapon which should end my miserable life:—but a powerful hand always seemed to check me; a tremendous voice seemed to cry, Oh! wretch, live, live, that thou mayest suffer!

"Let those who tremble at a description of my horrible sufferings, learn early to combat those passions which may involve them in guilt and in misery like mine."

Selected.

OTIOSÆ HORE.

A sorry and a doleful age the one we live in. We have sprang up like evil weeds with an evil generation. I have heard it aforetime reported, that goodness delighteth in the gladsome brightness of a right-merry day, with the sun speeding on in its beautiful path, and a clear blue arch of a sky stretched

above one : and verily, I have heard it reported, that the minds of just and righteous men are continually attuned to notes of joy, and cheerfulness, and harmless gaiety. But, alas ! upon what evil times have we fallen ! O men of Mannahatta ! the land which floweth with the pure milk of the mountain, and the honey of the wilderness—how unjust and unrighteous art thou in this thy day, if one may pass a judgment from the huge pile of grave, phlegmatic, severe, plodding articles which are heaped around us, staring honest mirth and festive joy out of countenance. Sometimes, however, when culling the numerous daily papers, monthly magazines, and quarterly reviews (which save us the expence of rewarding the services of an upholsterer,) we meet with good things, which, if they ever call a smile upon the face of that meek, though pretty faced damsel who walketh in Broadway of a fine summer afternoon, or, of that mild, benevolent looking gentleman who walks on the battery of a pleasant morning, it will be the cause of abundant rejoicing throughout our little band of——.

A CELEBRATED PREACHER.—

The Rev. Dr.—— is what is commonly denominated “a celebrated preacher.” His reputation, however, has not been acquired by his drawing largely upon his own stores of knowledge and eloquence, but by the skill with which he appropriates the thoughts and language of the great divines who have gone before him. Fortunately for him, those who compose a fashionable audience are not deeply read in pulpit lore, and accordingly, with such hearers, he passes for a wonder of erudition and pathos. It did, nevertheless, happen that the Doctor was once detected in his plagiarisms.—One Sunday, as he was beginning to delight the sprightly beaux and belles belonging to his congregation, a grave old gentleman seated himself close to the pulpit, and listened with profound attention. The Doctor had scarcely finished his third sentence, before the grave old gentleman uttered loudly enough to be heard by those near him, “that’s Sherlock !” The doctor frowned, but went on. He had not proceeded much farther, when his tormenting inter-rup-ter broke out with “That’s Tillotson !” The Doctor bit his lips, and paused, but again thought it better to pursue the thread of his discourse. A third exclamation of “That’s Blair !” was, however, too much, and completely exhausted all his patience. Leaning over the pulpit, “Fellow,” he cried, if you do not hold your tongue you shall be turned out. Without altering a muscle of his countenance, the grave old gentleman lifted up his head, and looking the doctor in the face, retorted, “*That’s his own.*”

CURIOSUS SCENE.

A curious scene took place at Rome during the carnival, at a dinner given by Cardinal Gonsalvi. The Austrian Ambassador gave an entertainment, to which were invited most of the respectable English, all of whom, almost to a man, refused the invitation. A few days after Gonsalvi, to make up the breach, gave a grand dinner, at which were present the said Austrian ambassador, and several English ; during the repast, an Englishman of distinction filled a bumper, arose, and gave in a loud voice, *success to the Neapolitans, and the cause of Liberty all over the world ;* in which he was joined by most of the English present ; the ambassador was thunderstruck, the wily cardinal confounded, some of the guests alarmed, but the greater number scarcely able to suppress their inward satisfaction. The remainder of the repast was hurried over in silence and consternation by the ambassador, cardinal, and other adherents, and the English guests and their host separated rather in dudgeon.

IMPROMPTU

*On seeing Miss Stone very attentive at Dr
Moyes's lecture, which suggested the idea
of her being the “Philosopher's Stone.”*

This Stone must for ever be sacred to love
And will, therefore, no friend to *Philosophy*
prove ;

Beware ! 'tis a Stone but too fatal to hearts
The Stone on which Cupid has sharpen'd
his darts !

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THE WHIPPOORWILL'S SONG.

When o'er the still tide of the wide rolling stream
 The zephyr glides gently along ;
 When white sails appear in the rising moon's beam,
 I love the rude whippoorwill's song.

Now twilight has veiled the young foliage of May,
 And shaded the hills of the west,
 While the murmuring sound of the tide swelling bay,
 Intrudes on the empire of rest.

Amid every pause of the soft sighing gales,
 That play through yon valley remote,
 A sound o'er the silence of evening prevails—
 'Tis my poor lonely whippoorwill's note.

How oft have I prais'd the bright warbler of day,
 And, veiled in the dark bosom'd grove,
 Heard the mocking-bird's song, or the wood-robin's lay,
 The heralds of spring and of love :

Yet dearer, when fancy in hues of delight,
 Paints joys which to childhood belong,
 Recall'd by the dew-dripping shade of the night,
 Appears the lone whippoorwill's song.

For though visions of pleasure, of care, and of fame,
 May render their accents less dear,
 Yet thy song, plaintive whippoorwill, still is the same,
 That first pleased mine infantine ear.

Though numbers there are who thy song may despise,
 And blame thy loud echoing strain,
 The innocent pleasures of childhood I prize,
 They live in thy wild notes again.

And though the vain world seems my actions to guide,
 May the thoughts of my bosom be long
 Unalter'd by fortune, untainted by pride,
 Unchang'd as the whippoorwill's song !

The above song we know, is original to our readers—It is taken from a small collection of poems “intended exclusively for the near relations and intimate friends of the author.” We hope we do not tread too far upon such sacred ground—The lady who wrote it is now no more ; and her relatives and friends “have nothing left of her in this world, but her memory and her tomb.”

A PEEP AT OUR CITY.

This book is composed expressly for the good people of old Amsterdam (thus titled as a kind of contrast to New Amsterdam, the well known original appellation of this goodly city, y'cleped New-York,) and as a poor return of one of the poorest and humblest of their descendents, for preparing the way for him to dwell in such a land as this, with such a sky above him, such a soil under him, and such agreeable walks and gardens to refresh himself in. There was a great stir and bustle in old Amsterdam, the land of our forefathers, and tenderly beloved by us, when this work was announced to be in agitation. A meeting of the wisest and most learned of the Amsterdamians was hastily called ; at which meeting three sages of very celebrated names—Zergendius Gubianbachius, Hobodia Gustomache, and Adam Cleisbothonian, were appointed to write, and to request us to forward our work with all possible expedition. We cannot deny (for we are plain, frank men) that this stir and bustle which our work caused in old Amsterdam, sorely grieved us, inasmuch as we wished, to appear before so large an audience, to adopt a theatrical phrase—with a modest gait, and downcast countenance. But there is no re-

sisting the multitude—when you are once in the midst, you must move on with them, and if the voice of fame speaks to the utmost boundaries of the Dutch dominions, we are not to blame, but must submit with patience. *In this book we treat of the Battery, Contoit's garden, and Scudder's museum.**

Alas, alas! how would it grieve the kind hearts of the Amsterdamians, did they but behold the *falling off* condition of that very battery where their fathers, retiring from the dust and noise of business, sat, with their long pipes, enjoying the gentle breeze which came in fresh from the ocean. Oh how have the stones fallen! and how has the earth followed them. Methinks thou look'st sad, kind Amsterdamian. But do not grieve! There is a report even now upon the breath of the multitude, that our most sapient and benevolent corporation, intend, with their usual liberality, to devote one hundred, or one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, not only to repair, but to add four, and perhaps five feet to its size—which, every body knows will make all the difference in the world.

It is well known by the folks of Amsterdam, that the rosy Dutch maiden of old was wont, when the sun poured its heat too fiercely upon the flag pavement, and the brick walls, to betake herself to that most beautiful of all promenades, the battery. Even thus it is while I am writing. Even at this time, it is becoming of an afternoon, the resort of beauty, wit, and fashion. Somehow, or other, they have fallen into an odd habit of missing the sun, as it rises out of their own noble bay, upon the castle, Price's House, and the steeple of Trinity Church; we however meet of a morning (though it is quite unfashionable) an elderly, and perhaps, rather a young gentleman, and as the day advances, here and there a gentle nurse with two or three rosy cheeked children playing and laughing around her. (I will tell the Amsterdam folks, in the way of confidence, that the young men and maidens continue their old trick of telling their love story on the battery.) But in general, every fine afternoon, how many a light step treads the soft grass of the battery; how many bright eyes grow brighter; how many merry

hearts beat merrier; and how many blooming cheeks bloom fresher and fairer. But I love best the calm and sober cheerfulness of the Sabbath afternoon. The enjoyment on this day is more general, the rich and the poor partaking of it together. Perhaps the children, huddled and romping with one another in the square hollow, are too loud in their mirth, but I am so fond of children it pleases me wonderfully. I love the Sabbath garment, and the Sabbath glow upon the face. What is more becoming to the maiden than her meek white garment on this day; or what blush is more pure than the blush of devotion on this day.

Though the battery is so pleasant, still Contoit's ice cream is pleasant too, when the evening cloud hath stolen over the scene. Contoit is so neat, his summer houses so snug, his shrubbery so well trimmed, and the flavor of his ice cream so fine, and peculiar from all others, that we invite every Hollander, and every descendant of a Hollander to enter in, and make glad their hearts with so excellent a feast, to be partaken in a garden so delightful, and sweet smelling.

Our own poet hath sung that

There's music once a week
In Scudder's balcony.

Now this is true—and a fine effect it has of a calm moonlight evening. To stand in that park, with the Museum in front, De G's house on one side, and the City Hall on the other—to stand thus, and listen to the full tide of music, as it is poured down from the balcony, by one of the bands belonging to one of our seventy-four's;—it makes one tread firmer upon those gravel walks—and makes the heart of one of the children of New-Amsterdam swell with pride, at the recollection that we are all freemen—and that band only strikes such notes as are fit for freemen.

* Talking about Scudder's Museum, puts us in mind of the Theatre—of which, by the by, we have a word to say to our readers—It is known to such as have looked over our prospectus, that therein is written a promise of a regular weekly critique. It has been thought best, on account of the lateness of the season, by the managers and us, to postpone this business until the first of September—when our readers may expect a glowing description of our new dressed Theatre, &c. &c.

MARRIED,

On Thursday evening, the 31st ult. at St. George's Church, by the Rev. Dr. Milnor, MR. GEORGE B. HUNTLEY, to MISS MARY COLES.—At the same time and place, by the same, MR. JOHN T. HUNTLEY, of the firm of G. & J. Huntley, to MISS JERUSHIA COLES, both daughters of Mr. Benjamin Coles, all of this city.

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